

JCA RECEIVES ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

By Olembe Wickham
Associate Editor

TORONTO, Ontario—The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA), a long-time community organization in the African Canadian community, has been awarded the prestigious and sought-after African Canadian Achievement Award (ACAA), in the Community Development category.

For years, the JCA has served the African Canadian community with its many and varied initiatives which include after-school programs, a young women's group and a series of life skills sessions.

The Caribbean Youth and Family Services office also operates out of the JCA and, before the Jobs Ontario Youth (JOY) program was cut by the government of Premier Mike Harris, the JCA was an agency for JOY.

The JCA is an incorporated non-profit organization whose mission is to maintain and support the cultural heritage of Jamaicans and to improve the quality of life for people of African and Caribbean descent in Canada. After having operated out of an office on Dupont Street for decades, the JCA took an ambitious, inevitable step by recently purchasing its own building -- a larger, more spacious location at 995 Arrow Road in North York.

The most recent event which the JCA hosted which drew an audience from a wide cross-section of the community was their "Tribute to Donovan Bailey." This event really brought the African Canadian community together as throngs of people came out to

honour the world's fastest man, Olympic gold medallist Donovan Bailey.

The JCA is one of 14 honourees being hailed by the ACAA, which was founded by Michael Van Cooten in 1985 and is produced and organized by *Pride Newspaper*, annually.

The ACAA recipient in the Law category is Hon. Judge Micheline Rawlins, a Justice in the Ontario Court of Justice. The Montreal-born judge has a long-standing

commitment to the field of law.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Political Science from McGill University as well as a Bachelor of Law (LL.B) from the University of Windsor.

Rawlins has been involved in teaching, first as a teaching assistant in McGill's Political Science department and as a teaching fellow at the University of Windsor's Faculty of Law.

Between 1983 and 1986, Rawlins was a sole practitioner and worked part-time as a Crown Attorney in Essex County. From 1986 until 1992, she was an Assistant Crown attorney in Kent County. Her big day came on October 15, 1992 when she became an Ontario Court Judge with Windsor's Provincial Division.

Rawlins has also taken time from her busy schedule to give back to her community. She has been involved with the Windsor Board of Education, the Windsor Urban Alliance and was a team manager in the Atom House League in the Windsor Minor Hockey Association.

Peel Board of Education Trustee Cliff Gyles, the ACAA honoree in the Education category, is currently Canada's longest-serving African Canadian politician. He was first elected as a trustee in 1980 and has been re-elected for four subsequent terms. At the end of his present municipal term in November of

1997, Gyles will have served for 17 years as the only person of color with the Peel Board of Education, aside from recently-appointed Peel Board of Education director Harold Brathwaite.

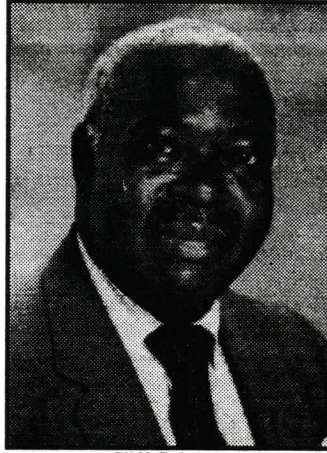
Some of Gyles's community efforts have included his involvement with the Chalkers scholarship at Westwood Secondary School and the establishment of Black Studies Programs in high schools. He was also pivotal in the fight to have the Peel Board of Edu-

cation become one of the first to establish equity and anti-discrimination policies.

Other ACAA recipients are: Dr. Samuel Donkor, senior pastor at All Nations Full Gospel Church (Religion), actor Luther Hansraj (Arts and Entertainment), Lenny and Gwen Johnson of Third World Book Store (Business), veteran community contributor Herb Carnegie (Hall of Fame), CBC Producer Cynthia Reyes (Media), Dr. Granville Da Costa (Medicine), Liberal Senator Anne Cools (Politics), Dr. David Burt (Science), Sylvia Sweeney

(Sports), Karen Warner (Youth Achievement) and the late Barbara Isaac (Posthumous Award).

The African Canadian Achievement Awards ceremony, demonstrably the most prestigious event during Black History Month, will take place on Saturday, February 22, 1997 at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto. ☐



Cliff Gyles



Hon. Judge Micheline Rawlins

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